

24 October 1967

Dear Bill

In my observation it is pretty much true that the Agency has no interest in historical projects, plus a repugnance for them to the extent that they may involve sharing its compartmented information. This negative is qualified only as follows:

It is interested in maintaining its own history, tightly held and compartmented.

It is interested in historical precedents relating to current matters of national security, but here the [REDACTED] comments to [REDACTED] apply.

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Its lawyers, like all lawyers, are interested in precedent. There are some interagency relationships in this field.

Counterintelligence is interested in the past personnel and modus operandi of foreign intelligence services as they bear on the present. It is happy to accept this kind of information from outside and may sometimes give a bit of quid pro quo to get it, but it will never enter into any "set of relationships."

The Studies, about which the Agency feels a bit queasy, is interested in historical essays as one ingredient in its mission to develop a professional community consciousness, at the cost of some infringement of the best security practices.

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This latter is [REDACTED] baby, one of the two institutional results (the other being his Princeton consultants) of his almost life-long effort to bridge from the secret bureaucracy to academia, particularly history. With his retirement at the end of this year I don't know

of anyone to pick up this torch, and the bridge, rather than be strengthened, is likely to grow frailer. I think your Kennedy group had better write us off.

Old business: Thanks for your continued tidbits. I'm trying to get answers to your 6 October questions on disinfo suspects. I personally know only that the Khokhlov is authentic.

New business: I've been asked to inquire whether you would like to do either or both of two things for us. The first is to expand into an essay, with historical examples, the thought you dropped in one of the tidbits that from Roberta Wohlstetter's "noise" there should be distinguished the signals that are deliberately deceptive -- was it "stringals" you called them?

The other, in which I have more interest, is to write us a regular feature commenting on additions to the open literature of intelligence. By comparison with the tidbits, aside from being on a quarterly schedule, this would assume less familiarity with the literature on the part of the reader and would be selective rather than encyclopedic, pointing out to the professional who rarely reads a book that maybe he ought to read this one -- or not be taken in by that one -- and why.

I enclose a few reviews of books, some of which you have mentioned but maybe not looked at closely enough to evaluate. As you know, this department of ours is pretty hit-or-miss. Your proposed contribution might help us regularize it.

Regards

Philip K. Edwards